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Religious forces and other activities  
in the history of Vineland, N.J.

by

Joseph Alfred Conwell.



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RELIGIOUS FORCES  
AND  
OTHER ACTIVITIES  
IN THE  
HISTORY OF VINELAND, N. J.

BY  
JOSEPH A. CONWELL  
(EX-MAYOR)

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"I AM A CITIZEN OF NO MEAN CITY"

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE 50TH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF VINELAND, N. J.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF  
THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING FUND  
BY  
THE SMITH PRINTING HOUSE  
VINELAND, N. J.









THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VINELAND



REV. JOHN O. WELLS  
PASTOR FROM 1866 TO 1887

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AND  
OTHER ACTIVITIES  
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# Religious Forces and other Activities in the History of Vineland

Inasmuch as Rev. Dr. D. H. King, our Pastor Emeritus, preached a historical sermon this morning and dwelt more particularly upon the intimate and spiritual history of our church, I feel that it is both appropriate and desirable that I, in what I shall say this evening, broaden the subject somewhat, and refer not only to the history of our own church, but to the various religious and other forces that have exerted an influence for good in our town during the past half-century. While the subject is too great to be fully discussed in the time allotted me, it should be stated with special emphasis that the history of a live, active church is inevitably a part of the history of a community. The church gives inspiration, encouragement and genuine vital force to every worthy enterprise and every good cause. To undertake to give the history of a church and of religious forces in general in a community like Vineland, where the churches and everything else grew up together out of a wilderness, and for fifty years have lived and labored and struggled together and turned that wilderness into a land of beauty and fertile fields and extensive manufacturing interests, where intellectual culture and high moral principles are maintained, is a task calling for the utmost rever-

ence and respect. If we candidly accept the plain, cold facts regarding the founding of Vineland, we must admit that it offered many advantages not enjoyed by older and differently constructed towns.

## THE OPPORTUNITY OF A WILDERNESS

When Mr. Charles K. Landis drove the now famous stake in the wilderness on the 8th of August, 1861, near where the West Jersey Railroad station now stands, he established not only a landmark, but a great historical starting point. This area was then a vast wilderness. It was such a wilderness that the conductor refused to stop the railroad train at the prospective city, and instead put Mr. Landis off near what is now Newfield, forcing him to walk five miles to drive his fancied city-centered stake. It was such a wilderness that Mr. Landis had to walk out to Sharp's corner on Main road to get his dinner. It was such a wilderness that the railroad officials refused to build a platform so people could get off the cars. It was such a wilderness that the government refused to recognize Vineland as a post office until Mr. Landis gave security for the expense incurred. Yet Mr. Landis, a young man of twenty-eight, had the faith and courage and grit to walk over this wilderness for weeks and months, and employ men to survey and lay out roads and avenues, and pull stumps and haul dirt. He advertised town lots and farms until he had not only spent all of his own resources, but had eventually gone in debt over three hundred thousand dollars to improve and beautify the prospective enterprise.

The early struggles and experiences of the founder of Vineland, while to some may seem like the work of a dreamer, were the true unfoldment of a long-sighted, orderly, systematic plan. During the first winter Mr. Landis maintained his headquarters out at Sharp's farm

house on Main road. And let me quote his words as found among his private papers:

"There were many days and weeks during that long and tempestuous winter when nobody came. To say that I never had moments of depression, when I looked out of my window upon the boundless stretch of wilderness, would be simply untrue. The southeast winds at night would howl around the corner of the house where I slept, sounding like wailing voices of ill omen and mockery. And as I listened to the dismal sound of the wind and thought of the possibility of no visitors, I would be struck almost by an icy chill. The greatest relief I found was in prayer."

The founder of Vineland did not claim to be a religious man, nor was he so regarded. I refer to these prayers of Mr. Landis, because so far as known, they were the first religious worship and the beginning of the religious history of what the world now knows as "Beautiful Vineland."

This brief outline faintly pictures the wilderness with its virgin soil and the man with his ambitions and motives. His determination was to build a model community free, if possible, from the objections he had seen elsewhere, and possessing those characteristics which experience had proved to best insure beautiful and healthful surroundings and the prosperity, happiness and general well-being of the people. With his life dedicated to this proposition, he, through the public press and other methods, and in the most widespread manner, invited the world to come and make Vineland a model community.

And in all candor he placed before prospective settlers an unusual opportunity. Here was offered what we all more or less crave—the chance to begin afresh and, to a marked degree, live life over again. To those of the north was offered a milder climate. Those in the crowded cities here found fresh air and

plenty of room. To those in ill health or weary of monotony was a new hope. Here were good prospects for the ambitious and an equal opportunity to all. The proposition appealed to men and women of intellect, energy and character, and they came from every direction and were received with cordial welcome. No matter from whence it came, all blood was new blood on reaching the primitive soil and inspiring atmosphere of Vineland.

## EARLY GROWTH

While at the end of the first year there were only about six settlers, yet at the end of 1862, the second year, about eighty persons attended Mr. Landis' first annual reception. His reception at the end of the third year was attended by over one thousand persons. The attendance at the end of the fourth year was two thousand, and about one thousand partook of supper. His reception at the end of the fifth year was attended by more than three thousand. Two brass bands furnished music and the occasion was an innovation to South Jersey. At this time the population of the tract was fifty-five hundred. In 1867, when Vineland was six years old, it was a community of about eight thousand population, containing churches of all the leading denominations, fourteen schoolhouses and twelve hundred pupils. The Presbyterian, Methodist and Episcopal churches were organized in '63. The Baptist, Unitarian and what was known as the "Friends of Progress" later, but when Vineland was six years old they all had flourishing congregations, the audience of our own church averaging three hundred and fifty persons on Sunday.

Not only had churches been organized at this time, but "The Historical and Antiquarian Society," "The Floral Society" the various social and secret Societies

had been organized and were existing much as they are to-day. Let us mention some of the things that took place when Vineland was only six years old.

The Sabbath schools were organized and prosperous, and on the 4th of July of that year, paraded the streets of our town. The procession was about a half-mile in length and seven hundred children were in the parade. They picniced in the Vineland Park and Rev. J. O. Wells, the pastor of this church, was one of the orators of the occasion. This custom of Sunday Schools uniting in picnics and excursions continued for many years, and I have seen a special train take over nine hundred persons from Vineland to the seashore on a Union Sunday School excursion.

Up until that year this church had used a melodion when it was exchanged for a cabinet organ. The Great World's Universal Exposition was held at Paris, France, and honorable mention was awarded by the Imperial Commission of that Exposition to Mr. Charles K. Landis for his great work in founding and promoting the success of Vineland, New Jersey, and he was placed upon record as one of the benefactors of the world. Professor Marcius Willson, in a public address during the year 1867, declared that Vineland made greater progress in those things which belong to advanced civilization, during six short years, than all Cumberland County made in the first two hundred years of its existence.

## THE PIONEER SPIRIT

The resources and initiative instinct of Vineland's pioneers were almost without limit. They had come from the four corners of the earth. Each man—and many women—was a distinct individual. While not one of them had been born here their loyalty and interest had all the intensity and enthusiasm of a second birth.



When the town was less than two years old Mrs. A. M. Spaulding its first poet composed some verses in its praise four lines of which were taken as a slogan.

“Brothers and sisters we become  
On touching Vineland sod  
Inmates of one expansive home  
Children of one true God.”

These lines were quoted in addresses, were often seen in the newspapers, occasionally displayed upon banners at public meetings and became almost a local patriotic confession of faith.

Among Vineland's early settlers were merchants, manufacturers, inventors, educators, physicians, reformers, editors, financiers, authors—men of affairs—who had both failed and succeeded elsewhere and who had come here to secure a change, to gain health, to retire or to find congenial climate or to hustle for success amidst new surroundings. There were men and women of talent—musicians, singers, artists, actors or adepts in other professions—accustomed to public life and no matter what the occasion, whether a school meeting, political caucus, farmers club, literary or theatrical entertainment, it was more like the work of leaders and professionals than amateurs. The social atmosphere was fascinating and there was an abundance of real life. The ability to grasp opportunities was well illustrated in 1868 when it was learned that the members of the New Jersey Editorial Association were to pass through Vineland on their way to the annual convention at Cape May. They were invited to stop off at Vineland; ninety seven carriages met them at the depot; they were conveyed over our town and township; Cosmopolitan Hall was turned into a banqueting room and they were sumptuously dined amidst a profusion of flowers and 250 editors with their wives left our depot delighted, and the result was, that for days



and weeks in the columns of almost every newspaper in New Jersey, Philadelphia and New York could be found editorials referring to Vineland with unstinted praise. What a splendid example for modern Boards of Trade and Commercial Leagues!

Although many of the early farmers were new at the business, many were the occasions which showed their apt ingenuity. One incident always seemed to me to be unusually clever. Mr. Landis for several years gave liberal cash prizes for the best specimens of farm products, a leading prize one year being fifty dollars in cash for the largest Dutchess pear. That Autumn Mr. A. J. Hamilton, of Oak Road and a charter member of this church, brought to town an immense overgrown Dutchess pear weighing twenty-two and one-half ounces. Mr. Landis was delighted, paid the prize money, placed the pear in a handsome glass case, exhibited it at our local fair, then at the New York State Fair in Madison Square Garden and at various County Fairs outside of our State. To produce this pear, Mr. Hamilton selected the best tree in his orchard, stripped it of all pears except one, fertilized and mulched and watered the tree all summer, propped and stayed the limb against storms and suspended the pear in a woven sack to support its weight. When Mr. Rockefeller, Jr. intimated that successful human beings, like perfect American Beauty roses require that ninety-nine be sacrificed in order that the hundredth may reach its fullest perfection and beauty did not know that the idea was first demonstrated by a member of this church in a Vineland pear orchard.

Had a visitor, during Vineland's early years, strolled among the people, from Newfield to South Vineland he would have met a class of people as various and interesting as could have been found anywhere in the nation. Let us tonight in imagination, follow him on such a jaunt.

At Newfield would be met a small well-clad gentleman, George May Powell—preacher, traveler, publicist, statesman, publisher of the international Sunday School maps; whose speech was the chief political document in the campaign of Lincoln, President of the first Congress of Forestry, first man to propose Y. M. C. A. buildings, a chief originator of The Hague Peace Court, President of the Peace Society, national temperance advocate, writer, orator and Christian statesman.

Here also lived Mr. Job Ellis, teacher, linguist and pioneer in the study of vegetable *bacteria*, whose discoveries and writings are recognized the world over, his great work "*North American Pyrenomycetes*," printed in Vineland, costing him and his devoted wife twenty years of incessant research and labor.

At North Vineland lived John L. Mason inventor of the "Mason Fruit Jar," which cost years of experiment, the waste of three hundred thousand dollars in two hundred lawsuits over the patent and what is too often true the final discouragement and poverty of the inventor, but the jar revolutionized the methods of preserving fruit and for forty years has been a household necessity in almost every civilized home.

In Vineland, at that time, women took a more active part in business and public affairs than elsewhere. The "Ladies' Store" owned by Misses Leavitt and Sherburne was for a generation the leading dry goods and variety business of South Jersey. Among our most prominent women was Mrs. Louise Cooper Bristol—tall, graceful, accomplished; teacher, orator, poet, essayist, a leader in modern thought and ideas; another, Miss Abby F. Leavitt, her hair short and groomed by a barber, but her head long and mind alert,—merchant, church official, Sunday School Superintendent, W. C. T. U. President, a champion of women and a leader of men; another, Mary E. Treat,

reclusive and quiet,—a writer of books on nature, insects and birds and known as well in Europe as in her own land.

Never has woman been more devoted and helpful than during the making of Vineland. When Louis Bristol ran for Congress, Mrs Bristol plead for his election from the platform, her ability causing her to be asked to place General Butler in nomination for the presidency at the National Convention at Cincinnati when her eloquence won her national fame. During the years that J. B. Duffy published the VINELAND DAILY NEWS, Mrs. Duffy, with marked ability, wrote its editorials and her other writings in book form received wide circulation. During the years of the pastorate of Rev. W. W. Meech at the South Vineland church Mrs. Meech, herself an ordained minister, was ever ready to occupy her husband's pulpit and her sermons were always both eloquent and practical. And in merchantile, and other enterprises it was often difficult to tell which was the leading spirit and head of the concern the husband or the wife. Truly can it be said of the Vineland woman "She hath done what she could."

On our Streets, in those days, were occasionally seen women dressed in male attire and Dr. Mary Walker here found congenial friends to visit and her presence now and then added interest to our town. These women were ridiculed in private and in public press and Vineland to some extent shared the obliquy. But they were all educated, and sincere and loyal champions of a cause they loved and they did much to gain for woman that recognition as a political factor which justice demands shall be hers. If the male attire or "bloomers" infringed upon the rights of the sterner sex it can be said of each of them that what remained woman was a genuine lady and what turned man was always a gentleman.

On our Streets would be seen an unusual number of men who had fought under the flag from '61 to '65 and when peace returned married and settled here, and Vineland never had better or more loyal citizens than the soldier citizens who during the rebellion bared their lives that the flag might live.

Along our streets would be seen more retired preachers than elsewhere. Vineland was known as the Mecca of the retired minister. These men, educated, and interested, and gifted with tongue and pen, were always a genuine moral force in our community and all of them loyal examples of the perseverance of the saints.

He would here meet three gentlemen all formerly teachers and college professors. One of them—Prof. D. O. Kellogg, author, orator, cyclopedist; handsome, eloquent and brilliant; another, Prof. N. B. Webster, chemist, scientist and cyclopedist who had stored in his mind fifty thousand dates as accurately as the records on the printed pages of history and yet was as congenial and free from pomp as a child; the other Prof. Marcius Willson, handsome, well poised, faultlessly dressed, a gentleman and a scholar par excellent, the author of more school books than any other American, about thirty altogether bearing his name and the royalties paid him by Harper Brothers alone being over two hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

On our streets almost every day was seen and heard that ubiquitous humorist, poet, jester and punster, John W. Hurn whose laugh was hearty and loud and whose wit was quick and keen. Here on Saturday afternoons gathered the populace, men and women who had succeeded elsewhere as merchants, authors, editors, physicians, manufacturers and political reformers and they and their children bore the stamp of cultured energy. Among the children destined to be-

come men of influence were James H. Ingram now medical missionary to China and who is doing much by translating books to revolutionize medical practice in that great nation. Here were seen two farmer boys—Ernest Bagnall, inventor and manufacturer, of Cleveland, Ohio, and his brother Alfred Bagnall, a manufacturing promoter in Japan, whose home is the finest private residence built by an alien in the Japanese Empire; Edwin M. Ellis, who has organized hundreds of Sunday Schools in the far west; Henry W. Wilbur, editor, author, preacher, reformer and leader in the cause of peace, temperance and righteousness. Among the rising young men was Charles Keighley, ambitious, determined, tireless, laying the foundation of success for himself and making of our town a centre in the manufacture of footwear, which from the day he started has been Vineland's most constant and reliable support.

At South Vineland were the Bidwells who turned the sand beds into veritable mines of wealth; the Wheeler family, reformers and temperance workers, among them Frederick Wheeler now a national leader in temperance work; the Gillam family, all of them brilliant of intellect and all destined to rise in the world; one of them, M. M. Gillam now the father of the modern method of graphic advertising so universal and which has revolutionized the methods of doing business. Among the school boys was D. Harry Chandler, bright, quick, energetic, who has since sought and found "*Acres of Diamonds*" at home, realized in the growth and success of the shoe manufacturing plant which has been a substantial feature of Vineland's industry and enterprise. Here lived William A. Daggett inventor of the well known folding clothes rack and of the closed baking pan, improved forms of which are now made and sold all over the world.



These are only samples of the thousands who flocked to Vineland during its early years, who became known as the "Vineland Pioneers," and of whom an early poet said:

"Through hardship, weariness and tears,  
We wrought the task of pioneers,  
In '62 some seventy-five,  
Would represent our little hive,  
Now thousands throng on every hand,  
And yet there's room and work and land."

The question arises: What should be expected from a colony of people, newly organized, composed of men and women of such exceptional character, intellect, initiative enterprise and devotion to the public interest? Let us mention a few things that these people gave to the world.

#### VINELAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO TEMPERANCE

Let us begin with the founder of Vineland. It was he who decided that Vineland should be a temperance community, free from the dram shop with its temptations and allurements. He not only established temperance principles in this community, but did much to teach the world its advantages. *His method was "Local Option."* It is true that there were efforts to secure local option many years before Vineland was started, but Mr. Landis gave the movement a new life. After Vineland had become established, Mr. Landis wrote an address on the subject of local option, bringing to his aid the experience in the town he had founded, and his observations in extensive travel and study of the subject. He delivered this address before the Legislature of New Jersey at Trenton, and at that time the subject was so dense to the people in general that he did not think it was wise to endeavor to get a general petition, but he went to the State Penitentiary



and got the inmates of that institution to sign a petition for the law, and when he delivered his address, he held his manuscript in one hand, and a petition signed by the inmates of the New Jersey Penitentiary in the other, and upon his return home he had his address published and sent about two thousand of them broadcast over the world. It was my privilege forty years afterward to stand in the same legislative hall and plead before the legislature to enact the same law, showing the vitality of the principle but the slow pace of reform legislation in New Jersey. This address, no doubt, did much to create an interest and to establish the justice of such a law to curtail the ravages of strong drink through the legalized saloon, and while various measures have been adopted from that time until now, to accomplish the purpose, it must be admitted that local option has been one of the most effective measures to close the doors of the American saloon, and to-day more than one-half of the population and more than one-half of the territory of the United States are free from the saloon, and local option perhaps, more than any other measure so far advanced, has been the method that has brought about this great and blessed reform. It can be truthfully asserted that more citizens of our nation, including all classes of people, from the present occupant of the White House to the humblest voter, are committed to local option, than have been committed to any other temperance movement so far proposed. And the first systematic public address upon the subject was written on Landis avenue and two thousand printed copies were mailed from the Vineland post office. For many years perhaps more than any other town in the nation, Vineland was referred to and held up as a practical demonstration of what temperance will do in promoting the success and well being of a community. May it always deserve the reputation it has made.

## THE FIRST NATIONAL CAMP MEETING

In 1867, when Vineland was only six years old, the officials of the great Methodist church in America decided to hold what was termed a Camp Meeting of national magnitude and importance. In looking around for a location Vineland's reputation for morality and temperance principles naturally attracted their attention. The result was Vineland was chosen as the most desirable place for the first great "National Camp Meeting" to be held in America. Our citizens made great preparation for it and the welcome was cordial and sincere. Vineland Park was turned into a veritable city of canvass. Great, mammoth tents were erected capable of accommodating from one hundred to one thousand people. Wells were settled to furnish water and every convenience for a great gathering was made. Our local paper, THE VINELAND WEEKLY, decided to publish a daily edition and it was not only liberal but lavish in its attitude toward the management. During the time of the camp meeting it published fifty-four special columns. Every sermon was printed almost in full and no event in the history of the town ever received more enthusiastic consideration from the local populace than was given this first great National Camp Meeting. The attendance was tremendous. One hundred and thirty-five ministers, including the eminent Bishop Matthew Simpson, were in attendance. It was estimated that on one or two occasions the attendance numbered from twelve to fifteen thousand. One Sunday morning over six hundred vehicles passed along one road before twelve o'clock, all loaded with people bound for the Camp Meeting in Vineland Park.

Rev. A. E. Ballard, who is at the present time President of Ocean Grove, was in charge. This meeting was a great success and all visitors went

home singing the praises of Vineland. What was the result? Its success led to the establishment in the following year of Ocean Grove as a permanent National Camp Meeting ground, incorporating features of government like Vineland, only perhaps more so. It was found that to make such an institution a success, permanent buildings must be erected, and the erection of permanent buildings suggested meetings of other sorts, and soon the added custom arose that when the camp meeting had closed its exercises, to devote some days or weeks to matters outside of religion. Music and art and intellectual, scientific and other subjects were taught and promoted. As an outgrowth of Ocean Grove other similar national Camp Meetings were established. Among the most famous were at Martha's Vineyard, Mass.; Lakeside, Ohio; Bartley, Neb. and Pacific Grove in California. The success of the special features of these camp meetings caused Bishop Vincent and others to consider the matter of establishing centers devoted to various special subjects, and in response to this idea, in 1874, Bishop Vincent and Lewis Miller, of Ohio, founded the "Chautauqua" in western New York and out of this beginning grew a great system of education along neglected lines, until the growth of the Chautauqua movement has reached almost every town and community in the United States. Two hundred and sixty thousand people have joined in its work and more than fifty thousand have graduated after a full four years term of study. The Catholic church and the Jewish church both have established Chautauqua centers. The Chautauqua idea inspired the founding of a system in which talent of all kinds—music, lectures and an almost endless variety of entertainment—was placed within reach of almost every platform and community. This system has revolutionized the Lyceum platform. The entire field devoted to this kind of work is organized in our nation

today. It fills a place between the school house and the church, and outside of the church and school it is now the greatest power in existence in developing wholesome thought and progressive sentiment in the United States.

And if we trace its history, we find one of its chief beginnings and inspirations in the success of the first national Camp Meeting held in Vineland Park forty-six years ago. And when we recall the fact that for more than twenty years Vineland has annually maintained one of the most successful Courses of Star Entertainments in the nation, it shows that we have retained our appreciation of moral and intellectual culture and that Vineland in a signal and practical way has profited by the cultured zeal of its early pioneers.

## VINELAND THE FOUNDER OF GRAPE JUICE

Another great movement to the credit of Vineland is the adoption of "Unfermented Wine" for sacramental purposes, and the promotion of Grape Juice as a commercial article. In the spring of 1869, when Vineland was only eight years old, Dr. T. B. Welch was elected Recording Steward of the Vineland Methodist Episcopal church. He protested against his election on the ground that he would not provide fermented wine for the communion service. He was told that "he was elected to the office and could furnish what he pleased." When grapes were ripe that fall, Dr. Welch, helped by his son, Dr. Charles E. Welch, squeezed grapes with his hands and made the first unfermented Grape Juice of modern times. It was made and sold under the name of "Unfermented Wine" for over twenty years, when the name was changed to "Grape Juice." It then appears that the Vineland First Methodist Church first used Unfermented Wine for communion purposes.

Dr. T. B. Welch, Dr. H. L. Tuller, Mr. Harrison Durgin and Captain Daniel Tracy were all pioneers in promoting its use and later Mr. Frank A. Breck, Mr Henry Raisch, Mr. John Maytrott, The Vineland Grape Juice Company and others have done much to introduce its use to the public. Dr. Welch, Harrison Durgin and Captain Tracy promoted its use for sacramental purposes, and Dr. Tuller advocated it as a medicinal and household article. While all of these men deserved great credit for the enterprise they displayed in its adoption by the public, to Dr. T. B. Welch and his son, Dr. Charles E. Welch, now known as The Welch Grape Juice Company, belong the special credit of introducing Grape Juice to the world for sacramental purposes and as an article of commerce. I am informed that from the small beginning in 1869 the Welch Grape Juice Company now annually press over fourteen thousand tons of grapes, making an output of over two million gallons of product. Many concerns now manufacture Grape Juice and its sale is enormous. At the present time practically all of the Protestant churches almost throughout the world use the unfermented Grape Juice instead of fermented wine. As a temperance movement its influence is beyond computation. The Grape Juice business will always be associated with Vineland, as it was for years almost the source for the world's supply, the first gallon being bottled at Fourth and Plum Streets. Vineland Grape Juice is now known all over the world. For years Vineland supplied not only churches in every State in the union, but it was sent from our town to every mission center of the Methodist church throughout the world. Large quantities are sent to South America,

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NOTE—In a recent Report, George E. Anderson, Consul General at Hongkong states that American Grape Juice is rapidly gaining foothold in China. that already about \$50,000 worth is being annually distributed, that there is a climatic demand for nonalcoholic drinks; that Grape Juice is being found specially wholesome for women and children; that alcoholic drinks are being less and less used and that the market for Grape Juice is constantly increasing in the Empire.

U. S. CONSULAR TRADE REPORTS, MARCH 21, 1914



Australia, to Europe, to China and Japan and to the Islands of the sea. Minister Wu, Ambassador from China to the United States, became acquainted with the virtues of Grape Juice while in America, and upon his return to China, he occasionally ordered it in quantities and it was sent direct from Vineland to his home in the Chinese Empire.

From every viewpoint which it is possible to consider the subject, Grape Juice is one of the greatest factors in promoting temperance that has yet been devised. Nothing so takes the place and is so well calculated to become a substitute for alcoholic drinks as Grape Juice, and the time surely will come when it will be almost as much of a common household article as is milk to-day. Those who promoted its adoption are to be considered among the world's benefactors. For Vineland to become the originator and promotor of such an enterprise destined to so bless mankind the world over, is an honor worthy of the highest praise.

## VINELAND'S PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Another achievement of Vineland is found in the establishment and history of its public institutions. Near our town are three public institutions with a population of over one thousand and all of them are models in construction and management. Twenty-five years ago the care and training of unfortunates, either of mind or body, was not only crude, but the whole subject was treated with almost universal indifference. When in 1888 Rev. S. O. Garrison founded the New Jersey Training School for Feeble Minded Children, it became the nucleus of what was destined to become in the course of its development, the center of a new era in this line of benevolence. The Training School in recent years has developed a system of study and of investigation that has attracted attention



not only in this country, but in foreign lands. There is much not only interesting, but closely related to the happiness and security of the human race associated with the study of the cause and prevention of mental deficiency. Those connected with our Training School have undertaken to systematically study and, if possible, to solve the great questions which arise in connection with this subject. Progress in research work by those connected with the Training School has already made of Vineland a world centre in the study of mental defects. They have so far succeeded that they have attracted the attention of students and specialists in this particular department throughout the nation. They have also instituted a course of study, carried on during the summer months, devoted to such subjects and methods as have a practical application in the education of children in general who are backward in the regular school studies. This field is an exceptionally interesting one and invites increasing consideration along lines that are eminently practical and vital. Already more than three hundred teachers have taken the prescribed course at the Training School and have gone out into various parts of the nation better equipped not only to teach, but no doubt impressed with the importance of the subject of mental conditions. This movement cannot fail to have a permanent basis and will develop in many ways, and as people are instructed and an intelligent sentiment is created regarding the desirability of improving the race, great good will result to mankind in general. The study of this subject has gone far enough to prove that the progressive thought of the world in the social, political, intellectual and medical fields will become interested and concerned, and the day is not far away when a more correct knowledge of the causes which lead to all defects of mind will prevail and the measures either of legal enactments or

education that can best prevent their occurrence will be utilized and the improvement of the race will then become a living issue and one of the duties of the patriot and of every lover of his fellowman.

## FRIENDSHIP AMONG RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

In looking up the achievements of Vineland along religious and moral lines, I have been impressed with the part that the churches have taken and how friendly they have worked together in building up not only the cause of the Master, but in promoting everything that was for the good of the town and community. When the walls of our church were erected and the roof had been finished, boards were used in this room for seats, resting on nail-kegs, and the good Presbyterians of those days invited the Methodists to come in and worship, and I have been informed that the Methodists helped buy the original seats in this church, and when our church has been undergoing repairs we have accepted invitations to worship in other churches.

While those who came here represented the widest differences of religious faith, yet they lived in comparative harmony. In Vineland were all kinds of beliefs, orthodox and otherwise, and yet as we look back on its history we find that unfriendly controversies have largely faded away. Almost every belief exists here to-day and have houses of worship or independent places where they adhere to their own forms of ceremony. This is desirable. Divided into separate groups we no doubt live in greater harmony and accomplish more good than possible otherwise.

Vineland has occasionally suffered from the exaggeration of those who did not understand the situation. The chief difference between Vineland and other places has been that here every man and woman



THE NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
CORNER STONE LAID THANKSGIVING DAY, 1913. NOW IN COURSE OF ERECTION



has felt free to publicly express his or her private opinions upon all subjects, including religion, and where a sufficient number agreed upon any doctrine or line of thought they felt at liberty to organize and hold religious meetings suited to their own views and tastes no matter how widely they differed from the prevailing beliefs and more widely accepted forms of worship. Many years ago the great Metropolitan papers seemed to delight in creating an impression that Vineland, religiously and otherwise, was different from other places, yet this might be strongly questioned. I have seen copies of these newspapers asserting that at certain meetings held in Vineland, doctrines were preached that deserved to be criticized, that marriage vows were loosely held and religion in general was ridiculed, yet these things were circumscribed to narrow limits. It was true, however, that differences of opinion in religion, politics and other matters, caused many a controversy, and there have been as many pop-guns filled with hot air to explode in our midst as in any town in the United States, yet it can be as truly said that when there was genuine reason for a united effort on the part of our people to crush some evil, no town in the United States could summon heavier artillery and deal a more crushing blow to any invasion that threatened the welfare of the community, than could Vineland.

When I came to Vineland thirty odd years ago I received a letter from a friend of mine referring to these things. My attention was called to a national convention, that had been held in this town, composed of women with peculiar notions regarding religion and morals, at the time styled "free thinkers" and where one of the leaders more bold than others made assertions regarding marriage and moral relations that were considered grossly improper. But let me tell you that this same woman, born in the rurals of Tennessee, has

experienced poverty, obscurity, notoriety, fame, social position and a title as a wife and widow of a millionaire philanthropist who was knighted by England's King. And though her life has had many changes including a period of mazy religious belief, she is now "Lady Cook" of London noted for her intelligence, and interest in the poor, an earnest Christian, a genuine philanthropist devoting her wealth and talents to uplift those who are downtrodden and discouraged.

Many years ago during a special revival of religion in this town, when the churches were united, and concerted effort was made to reach outsiders and bring them into the fold of the church, those who were opposed to that sort of thing, paraded the streets, and a young lady riding on a white horse led the procession up Landis Avenue. It was looked upon by some as a defiance of that which was sacred and holy. But let me tell you that this same young lady came back to Vineland years afterward a converted and consistent Christian, and for years, in the town in which she has lived, has been zealous in church work, and I know of others, less conspicuous, who have joined the ranks of Christian workers, who in early life sympathized and to some measure took part in activities that seemed to be in opposition to that which we religiously hold sacred and dear. The prevailing thought of our people however has always been loyal to scriptural doctrines and the prevailing trend of effort has always been toward higher ideals. Let us learn to look upon the antagonisms in the religious life of Vineland during its history as rather a virtue than an evil. There has always been not only an earnestness, but a joy and a hearty enthusiasm in the moral and religious activities of Vineland.

The churches, taken as a whole, have always been willing to join hands with every good work, and in



few towns have the various religious elements lived in greater harmony. Our church bells on Sabbath morning, ring in unison and the musical tones of the Episcopal church chimes are a delight to all.

I was impressed sometime back in reading a notice of our Methodist friends during Vineland's early history. In those days they had plenty of room, plenty of ground outside, and their advertisement of a church fair ran thus:

"To our citizens:

FAIR, AT METHODIST CHAPEL. Bring anything worthy of a show. Fruits, vegetables, live stock, tools, driving horses, cows, etc. Let Vineland fairly represent itself. Ladies are especially expected to show flowers, fancy work, specimens, etc. No danger of crowding. Come all. Whatever you bring you will get a prize or receive honorable mention."

Our Presbyterian church sometime afterward, not to be outdone, held a fair and it offered as a prize—"A New Bonnet"—to the pastor's wife, including all the churches of the town, who received the most votes for her popularity. The object of the fair was to raise money to finish the top of the tower of the Presbyterian church. I do not know what pastor's wife won the bonnet, but they made enough money to finish the church tower. Whether the four peaked top of the tower was patterned after the bonnet or not, was not stated. But these events show that in those pioneer days when churches needed money, they used means at hand to get it.

Our churches have been holding Union Thanksgiving services since the beginning of the town. One of the first was held in this church. We are informed that the church was crowded, although a rainy day. In those days they knew better perhaps than we know now how to get a crowd out Thanksgiving Day.

Pastor Wells was the speaker and on that Thanksgiving morning when the congregation had assembled, a young man came up one of these aisles with a young lady leaning on his arm. They stood in front of this altar and were united in marriage, and after receiving that famous kiss, given to all young brides by Pastor Wells, they went out man and wife. I say this for the benefit of the young men and women present, because our handsome new church when completed, will afford a delightful environment for the marriage ceremony.

This church was first organized July 7, 1863, with twenty-nine members. The first sermon preached in Vineland was by Rev. Mr. McConnaughay, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Millville, the services being held in Mr. Mabbitt's barn, then located at the corner of Landis avenue and Myrtle street. The first communion service was held in a school house where the Grove House now stands, and was conducted by the Presbyterians, with sixty participating. This church was dedicated by Rev. Ezra Eastman Adams, who had been Professor of Theology in Lincoln University, and Editor of "*The Presbyterian*" of Philadelphia.

Rev. Samuel Loomis, the first pastor, was installed July 7, 1863.

Rev. John O. Wells, was installed April 19, 1866.

Rev. D. H. King, January 1, 1867.

Rev. J. Russell Verbrycke, November 3, 1912.

While the church has been in existence fifty years, it has been served by only four pastors. All of these pastors have been able, earnest, christian men, and beloved by the people they served.

Mention should be made of the career of Miss Abbie F. Leavitt as a member of this church. She



REV. J. RUSSELL VERBRUYCKE  
PASTOR SINCE 1912



REV. DAVID H. KING, D. D.  
PASTOR FROM 1887 TO 1912



served as a Sunday School Superintendent for seventeen years, was a Trustee and Treasurer for many years. She was active, aggressive and especially devoted to the cause of temperance. She was President of the local and county W. C. T. U., and during her administration in our community the cause of temperance was a live one. For many years union temperance services were held in rotation in the various churches, one Sunday evening every three months. Temperance meetings were held in the W. C. T. U. hall every Sunday afternoon for many years. A temperance Sunday School was carried on in connection with these meetings, and during these years Vineland was visited by nearly all the leading temperance workers of the nation. The first Order of Good Templars in the state was established in Vineland. Among those who have visited Vineland and delivered addresses upon the subject of temperance are John G. Woolley, Clinton B. Fisk and Governor John P. St. John, all presidential candidates, Francis Willard, Neal Dow, Mary Lathrop, J. Ellen Foster. Dr. Anna Shaw, Francis Murphy, Clinton Howard, Col. George W. Bain, Dr. C. H. Meade, Helen Gouger, and George Scott, a number of whom have been here several times.

During the pastorate of Rev. D. H. King, D. D., our church enjoyed unusual prosperity and he displayed great energy and earnestness. Dr King can well claim to be the founder of "OLD FOLKS' DAY" now so well known and adopted by many churches throughout the country. While isolated services had occasionally been held of special interest to the aged, Dr. King's enthusiasm and interest in old people made the celebration popular for which he deserves special credit. Old Folks' Day has been observed in this church on the second Sunday of September annually



for twenty years and has been heartily appreciated by the old people of this community.

Dr. King during his ministry, made over sixteen thousand pastoral calls, carrying sunshine and encouragement into the homes of his parishioners. He received into this church nine hundred and twenty-four members. He performed four hundred and twenty-seven marriage ceremonies and what a delightful vision this must be to his memory. What a connoisseur of bridal flowers! What a splendid judge of wedding cake! He also conducted six hundred and sixty-five funerals. This would be a funeral every day for nearly two years. To stand beside so many coffins and speak words of consolation to those who are bereaved, and offer the assurances of the gospel surely entitles a man to a special reward in the home of the blessed.

## POETRY, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Poetry and Literature have been indigenous to Vineland since its birth. Our town is greatly indebted to those who are inspired by the Muse. I was surprised at finding eight volumes of poetry in the Historical Society written by Vinelanders. These poets have done much to keep Vineland's popularity and progress on the crest of the wave and to combat those who have been disposed to criticise and belittle.

"Friends, come and see—nor stay and cry,  
'Utopian,' 'a sell,' 'a lie,'  
Once here you'll find like one of old,  
That the attractions have not been told,  
While through each coming golden year,  
Your Vineland home shall be more dear."

Nearly every public event in the early history of the town was accorded the recital of a poem special

for the occasion. The first newspaper published contained an original poem; most of the issues for years contained original verses, many of them singing the praises of Vineland. I have known most of these poets, and their acquaintance has been a pleasure and a profit. They have loved Vineland and its people and their efforts were to make happiness and sunshine attend the struggles and sorrows of life's experiences.

Dr. King is to be numbered among Vineland's recognized poets. He has enshrined in verse the sentiments of many occasions and at his anniversary every year we have sung together a hymn of his composing. This has added an interest and a charm to the recurring exercise as the years went by.

We also have in our membership Mrs. Carrie Ellis Breck, who has written over twelve hundred hymns and over two hundred other poems and articles for papers and magazines. Many of her hymns have won a national reputation. One of them has been a favorite for years wherever Christian people have gathered and raised their voices in song and praise. I refer to that beautiful hymn, "FACE TO FACE."

Face to face with Christ my Saviour,  
Face to face—what will it be?  
When with rapture I behold him,  
Jesus Christ who died for me.

Face to face shall I behold him,  
Far beyond the starry sky;  
Face to face in all his glory,  
I shall see him by and by!

\* \* \* \* \*

This hymn written by Mrs. Breck, was first sung years ago by the evangelist Grant Tuller in front of this pulpit, and is now found in most of the modern collections of sacred songs.

Work of this kind and the recognition it has received surely is a compliment to our community and is worthy of being considered as one of Vineland's honored achievements. May Vineland's poets long live and others be born, because we know that so long as they do, it can be said that:

"The very name of Vineland charms,  
The weary ones elsewhere,  
The beauty of its meaning warms  
Desires to breathe its air.  
The land of fruit, the land of spring,  
Land neath a favored sky,  
Land where the strange bird's weary wing  
May fold, no more to fly.  
Land of adoption swift to come,  
Fair clime, vines and flowers,  
Clime that affords the heart a home,  
A sunny clime now ours."

General literature, as well as poetry, has also been native to Vineland. *One hundred and four* books are to-day in the Historical Society written by Vinelanders. This is a surprising number, and few towns the size of ours in this nation can claim as much. About forty of these books were written by men and women who have worshipped in this church. Not only has literature been produced and flourished here, but men and women devoted to patriotic and progressive measures, have visited Vineland and delivered addresses to a greater extent perhaps than any other town in the nation.

Vineland people have always been awake and willing to listen and learn. A square deal has awaited every question and every vital issue. Nowhere has woman's voice or woman's cause received a more cordial welcome. When Vineland was only nine years old, the county elected one of our citizens to the state

Legislature. He carried with him a liberally signed petition to change the state constitution in favor of equal suffrage. "Women's Rights" which meant woman suffrage, was as familiar a term and as much favored in Vineland forty years ago as is "Votes for Women" in the average town to-day. Vineland has never been a laggard but a leader and always among the first to make new footprints forming the aggressive and advancing pathway of progress.

One of the first great orators to come to Vineland was the giant reformer, Wendell Phillips, who occupied this pulpit. And from that time until now reformers, patriots, temperance workers, men with a message who loved mankind and had special powers to lead in world movements, have delighted in visiting Vineland and addressing our people, always going away convinced that here the popular mind and popular heart were in full accord with the onward march of progress and civilization. Among those with a national reputation, who have addressed Vineland audiences are the following: Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, President Taft, President Grant, Vice President Colfax, Grace Greenwood, Mary Livermore, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Julia Ward Howe, Dwight Hillis, Theodore Tilton, Governor Hadley, Henry George, James G. Blaine, Horace Greely, Fred Douglas, Bishop McCabe, John Temple Graves, Thomas Dixon, Frank Dixon, Hon. George R. Wendling, Russell H. Conwell, J. Irving Handy, Gen'l George B. Gordon, Dr. Harvey Wiley, Josh Billings, Bill Nye, Robert Colyer, Judge Lindsay, Joseph Fels, Frank Gunsaulus and a host of others.

## PHILANTHROPY

Our church has also made a name for itself in the cause of *philanthropy*. One of our officials, Mr. B. D.

Maxham, in his will, left \$100,000 to the Training School. Dr. R. B. Moore, during his residence in Vineland, I have been credibly informed, gave perhaps nearly as much to the cause of benevolence, education and religion. Mrs. Leake and others have done their part and I think it is within reasonable bounds to state that during the history of this church outside of what was given to various church Boards that more than a quarter of a million dollars have been given to various causes by those who worshipped here.

Our people in general have always been devoted to benevolence. In the founding and development of our public institutions they have done much to promote their growth and insure their success. And in the broader field of patriotism and philanthropy Vineland has always shown a spirit of loyalty and liberality worthy of the highest praise.

Special mention should be made of Dr. Moore's gift of the Italian Mission church and parsonage located in this town, both of which he built at his own expense. This mission has become a most worthy and successful field of Christian work. It is under the management of the Presbyterian Board. A flourishing Sunday School is maintained in connection with the church and the work is increasingly appreciated by those it is intended to reach. This church and the work connected with it is worthy of full confidence and support.

### A COLONIZING SPIRIT

The early settlers of Vineland gave to the world a practical lesson in city building. By adopting the system of small sized farms they developed a new era in the growing of fruits and produce. The new colony they helped to found and make successful has had a



wide and important influence.

As nature had given this region only limited advantages, the settlers employed artificial methods to meet the occasion. Our wide avenues and streets, ample sidewalks, beautiful shade trees, uniform building line, extensive advertising, under the magic power of brains and industry and sobriety, made this a model community. Vineland's success and growth established the success and growth of the colonizing spirit. This colonizing spirit has shown its power and influence not only throughout South Jersey, but beyond the borders of the state. The same brains that founded and established Vineland founded Hammonton, Rosenhayn and Sea Isle City. Out from Vineland went the founders of Holly Beach, Wildwood and Wildwood Crest, all of them splendid examples of constructive thought and enterprise. Wherever Vinelanders have migrated, whether to Florida or California, they have carried with them the cohesive and constructive qualities of genuine home and community builders.

Vineland's colonizing spirit was early recognized across the sea. Italian immigrants have been coming to Vineland almost from the beginning, and they have taken a foremost rank in developing and improving our land, establishing homes and promoting every form of enterprise by their industry, frugal habits and thrift.

It is estimated that at present there are over three thousand Italians living within a trading radius of Vineland and they constitute an important factor in every department of progressive activity.

When the Hebrew exodus from Russia took place in 1882, one of their chief colonies was founded in the vicinity of Vineland. This early settlement has been constantly growing and while the Jews have been successful at farming, their aptitude for business and

manufacturing enterprise has been increasingly marked. Their business acumen is a challenge to every form of rival and in our community they are maintaining the same spirit of thrift which history all through the ages has recorded in their favor. The Hebrews have shown their urban tendencies by founding villages and towns as centres of their population. Among these are Alliance, Norma, Brotmanville and the modern development of Rosenhayn. Much of the business and manufacturing in our town is conducted by the Hebrews and they keep in touch with the enterprise of our larger cities and many of them are affiliated with well known establishments of Philadelphia and New York. About three thousand Hebrews are located in this section, and their numbers and influence are constantly on the increase.

I have been informed that an average of three hundred letters per week are sent from Vineland to Europe, chiefly written either in Italian and bound for Italy or written in Hebrew and addressed to Russia. When we add the additional fact that more than one thousand persons get on and off the trains at our depots every day in the year, we realize that Vineland is in constant and vital touch with the outside world.

## CONCLUSION

It can well be claimed that few towns of Vineland's size are better known in America or Europe. We are as a city set upon a hill. Vineland's influence covers a realm upon which the sun never sets. Let us realize that whatever we do to establish the cause of religion or promote the principles of truth and morality, is of wide and vital significance.

Let us feel that the moral and religious history of Vineland's first half century is secure. The men and women who settled this wilderness and built the

churches and school houses and made it the success that it is, have mostly gone to their reward. Vineland is their monument. To possess a heritage so associated with noble efforts and high achievements is our good fortune. As we look about us we are proud of what we see.

Four thousand homes  
From a wilderness grown,  
Beautiful Vineland  
Everywhere known.

And to-night as we stand between the Vineland of the past and the Vineland of the future, may we resolve that by the practice of morality, of industry, of patriotism, of religion and of civic devotion, we will transmit unimpaired this garden spot of New Jersey to those who shall take our places in the years that are to come.







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